



University of Białystok
Faculty of Philology, Department of English Language
MA in English Philology

Specialization Exercises: Applied Linguistics 2
Literacy and English Education

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Schedule: Tuesdays/Thursdays 15:00-16:30, Room 26 (See Schedule for specific dates)

Attention to students: By appointment

Course Overview

Society's understanding of literacy has evolved especially since the latter half of the 20th century. This evolution is not just happening in English, however. Literacy scholars in other languages all over the world are proposing organic epistemological stances to literacy that transcend mere translations (Mora, 2016). Regardless of your understanding of literacy as just reading or writing or a more complex view such as, "the process of interpreting and creating text using multiple means and media, including technology, multiple languages, and diverse aesthetic forms of expression, in addition to the written and spoken word" (Mora Vélez, 2010, p. 1; Mora, 2012), literacy discussions are heated and oftentimes controversial. The discussions are also layered and interdisciplinary, "many of the issues involved in the evolution of thinking about 'literacy' seem to grow out of tensions around such paradigms as psycholinguistics, critical theory, sociocultural theory, cultural theory, sociolinguistics, and so on" (Lankshear, personal communication, 08/22/13)

Besides these interdisciplinary tensions, there is also a need to consider the roles of new technologies (Mora, 2014b) and the sociopolitical landscape (Mora, 2014a) in the new epistemological and instrumental (Mora, 2016) stances in the new configurations of today's language ecologies (Mora, 2014c ; 2015b). These new configurations invite second language researchers and practitioners to be more actively involved in the debates. Literacy, therefore, transcends the instrumental views of reading and writing as mere skills. Instead, we must consider how these renewed positions vis-à-vis literacy are an invitation to reconceptualize and recontextualize learning and teaching. This course encourages all of you to learn about and be actively engaged into these conversations.

This seminar, as a consequence, invites all participants to analyze and think about how some of the changes in literacy paradigms in the last 50 years will affect your own practice. We will zero in on the more progressive literacy paradigms influenced by the work of Paulo Freire and other research efforts from around the world. Course readings and discussions will delve on the conceptual underpinnings of each paradigm, their understanding of reading and writing, and the human development goals that each paradigm has ultimately proposed. Further readings and the ensuing assignments will provide you with a chance to reflect on how we can continue implementing these



paradigms in second language education, as part of an ongoing effort to build a “south-south scholarship” (Mora, 2016) of literacy.

Throughout the course, you will learn key concepts and authors in each of the literacy paradigms we will discuss, hoping that these resources will help each of you “acquire the concepts, ideas, theories, and vocabulary to begin to think and reflect on practical applications of [your] readings.” (Willis, personal communication, 08/21/13). In that regard, should any of you become more interested in any of the paradigms or concepts discussed in class (and especially those who might consider using literacy frameworks for your thesis projects), you should talk to me so that I can suggest further readings.

All sessions will work under a seminar format, where we will discuss the different readings that we are sharing in order to create more knowledge as the result of every session.

Course Topics

This course will comprise five sections, each lasting between 2-3 weeks. There will be a series of suggested readings for each class session, where we will both talk about the readings and offer additional insights about each proposed topic:

- Section 1: Understanding the idea of “literacy”
- Section 2: Critical literacy
- Section 3: New Literacy Studies
- Section 4: Multiliteracies and multimodality
- Section 5: Literacies in the digital age

Assignments

This course comprises three assignments, as follows:

Assignment 1: The notion of literacy in Europe and Poland: A critical review of the literature (30% of final grade)

Research in the field of literacy studies, on the one hand, has well established knowledge production centers, both in Anglo and non-Anglo settings. On the other hand, there are quite a few regions in the world where the ideas about literacy that we will discuss in class are emerging (see Pandya, et al, 2021, for an illustration). In small groups, you should survey the literature in specialized journals on education, linguistics, applied linguistics, philology, etc. in *all the languages at your disposal*. With that information, you will prepare an infographic that summarizes your findings. Along with the infographic, you should upload the list of references that you used to create it (format citations according to APA 7th Edition).

Assignment 2: English and other literacies around the city: A multimodal essay (30% of final grade)



Both New Literacy Studies and Multiliteracies have embraced the notion of multimodality (Kress, 1997, 2000, 2010; Mejía-Vélez & Salazar Patiño, 2014; Mora, 2013, 2014a, in press; Street, 2013) as a building block for a great deal of their work. In pairs or trios, you should prepare a multimodal essay that explains where and how you are (re)discovering literacy and multimodality in Białystok (see Mora, et al., 2018 for an idea of what you can do!) While your videos should include a healthy dose of images, sound, and video, it is also essential that you include plenty of narration that demonstrates a grasp of the fundamental concepts we are discussing in class (this is, after all, an academic exercise). Videos should be around 5 minutes in length. You should include all the readings from the on-site and virtual sessions (including the further readings) and reference all of them (APA style) in the credits.

Assignment 3: The new challenges for literacy in the new digital age (40% of the final grade).

Questions about new literacy configurations in today's classrooms and societies remains a hot topic in the field (e.g Kist, 2000, 2007). This assignment, as the bookend to the course, is an invitation to join this conversation from the different vantage points you all have brought to the class. I want you to propose frameworks, considerations, and potential pitfalls when incorporating all these new literacy paradigms in our schools and different sectors of society. You can choose to do this individually or in pairs. You may include interviews to colleagues or students (you will need consent to do so; you can tailor the consent used in the previous assignment for this purpose). You can use all the class discussions and readings (both required and further) plus at least five additional scholarly references per student. Your report should have at least 4000 words but should be multimodal in nature.

Class Schedule

Section 1: Understanding the idea of "literacy"

March 15

Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2011). *New literacies: Everyday practices and social learning*. McGraw-Hill Education. [Chapter 1]

Larson, J., & Marsh, J. (2005). *Making literacy real: Theories and practices for learning and teaching*. SAGE. [Chapter 1]

March 22

Kalantzis, M., & Cope. B. (2012). *Literacies*. Cambridge University Press. [Chapter 1]

Perry, K. H. (2012). What Is Literacy?--A Critical Overview of Sociocultural Perspectives. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 8(1), 50-71.

Street, B. V., & Lefstein, A. (2007). *Literacy: An advanced resource book for students*. Routledge. [Unit A5]

Section 2: Critical literacy

March 24



- Beck, A. S. (2005). A place for critical literacy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 48(5), 392-400.
- Janks, H. (2014). Critical literacy's ongoing importance for education. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 57(5), 349-356.
- Luke, A. (2012). Critical literacy: Foundational notes. *Theory into practice*, 51(1), 4-11.

March 29

- Comber, B. (2015). Critical literacy and social justice. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 58(5), 362-367.
- Mora, R. A. (2014). Critical literacy as policy and advocacy: Lessons from Colombia. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 58(1), 16-18.
- Morrell, E. (2014). Popular culture 2.0: Teaching critical media literacy in the language arts classroom. *New England Reading Association Journal*, 50(1), 5.

March 31

- Borsheim-Black, C., Macaluso, M., & Petrone, R. (2014). Critical literature pedagogy: Teaching canonical literature for critical literacy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 58(2), 123-133.
- Goodman, S., & Cocca, C. (2014). "Spaces of Action": Teaching Critical Literacy for Community Empowerment in the Age of Neoliberalism. *English teaching: Practice and critique*, 13(3), 210-226.
- Harste, J. C., & Albers, P. (2013). "I'm Riskin' It": Teachers Take On Consumerism. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 56(5), 381-390.

Section 3: New Literacy Studies

April 7

- Pahl, K. & Rowsell, J. (2005). *Literacy and education*. SAGE. [Chapter 1]
- Street, B. (2013). New literacy studies. In M. Grenfell, D. Bloome, C. Hardy, K. Pahl, J. Rowsell, & B. Street (Eds.). *Language, ethnography, and education: Bridging new literacy studies and Bourdieu*. Routledge.
- Knobel, M., & Lankshear, C. (2014). Studying new literacies. *Journal of adolescent & adult literacy*, 58(2), 97-101.

April 19

- Erstad, O., Gilje, Ø., Sefton-Green, J., & Vasbø, K. (2009). Exploring 'learning lives': community, identity, literacy and meaning. *Literacy*, 43(2), 100-106.
- Mora, R. A., Pulgarín, C., Ramírez, N., & Mejía-Vélez, M. C. (2018). English literacies in Medellín: The city as literacy. In S. Nichols and S. Dobson (Eds.), *Learning cities: Multimodal explorations and placed pedagogies* (pp. 37-60). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-8100-2_4



Wargo, J. M., & Oliveira, G. (2020). What constitutes community? Ethnographic perspectives on adolescent and adult literacy practice. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 64(1), 102-105.

April 28

Bitz, M., & Emejulu, O. (2016). Creating comic books in Nigeria: International reflections on literacy, creativity, and student engagement. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 59(4), 431-441.

Park, A., & Vasudevan, L. (2021). Remaking community with art. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 64(5), 589-593.

Stornaiuolo, A., & LeBlanc, R. J. (2014). Local literacies, global scales: The labor of global connectivity. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 58(3), 192-196.

Section 4: Multiliteracies and multimodality

May 5

The New London Group (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(1), 60-92.

Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2009). "Multiliteracies": New literacies, new learning. *Pedagogies: An international journal*, 4(3), 164-195.

Mills, K. A. (2015). *Literacy theories for the digital age*. Multilingual Matters. [Chapter 4]

May 10

Domingo, M. (2014). Transnational language flows in digital platforms: A study of urban youth and their multimodal text making. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 9(1), 7-25.

Mora 2019

Vasudevan, L., Schultz, K., & Bateman, J. (2010). Rethinking composing in a digital age: Authoring literate identities through multimodal storytelling. *Written communication*, 27(4), 442-468.

May 12

Pyo, J. (2016). Bridging In-School and Out-of-School Literacies: An Adolescent EL's Composition of a Multimodal Project. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 59(4), 421-430.

Rowell, J. (2020). "How emotional do I make it?": Making a stance in multimodal compositions. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 63(6), 627-637.

Yang, G. (2008). Graphic novels in the classroom. *Language arts*, 85(3), 185.

Section 5: Literacies in the digital age



May 17

- Altura, G. J., & Curwood, J. S. (2015). Hitting restart: Learning and gaming in an Australian classroom. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 59(1), 25-27.
- Burnett, C., & Merchant, G. (2011). Is There a Space for Critical Literacy in the Context of Social Media?. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 10(1), 41-57.
- Jacobs, G. E. (2013). Multi, digital, or technology? Seeking clarity of teaching through a clarity of terms. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 57(2), 99-103.

May 26

- Kist, W., Tollafeld, K. A., & Dagistan, M. (2014). Leading ourselves (tweets optional) An analysis of selected Twitter users. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 58(4), 317-326.
- Lammers, J. C., & Marsh, V. L. (2015). Going public: An adolescent's networked writing on fanfiction.net. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 59(3), 277-285.
- Rybakova, K., & Witte, S. (2019). Academic bloggers, commenters, lurkers and non-bloggers: how and why in-service English teachers blog. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 28(5), 575-588.

June 2

- Nichols, T. P., & LeBlanc, R. J. (2020). Beyond apps: Digital literacies in a platform society. *The Reading Teacher*, 74(1), 103-109.
- O'Byrne, W. I. (2014). Empowering learners in the reader/writer nature of the digital informational space. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 58(2), 102-104.
- Wong, S. S. H. (2015). Mobile digital devices and preschoolers' home multiliteracy practices. *Language and Literacy*, 17(2), 75-90.

June 7 – Final Presentations and Course Debriefing